

Message Text

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14-10

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-07 AGR-05 IO-10 SAM-01 /086 W

----- 086903

R 241710Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2584

INFO AMEMASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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EO 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IV LI

SUBJ: LIBERIAN PRESIDENT TOLBERT CONCLUDES VISIT TO IVORY COAST

REF: ABIDJAN 2150

SUMMARY: LIBERIAN PRESIDENT WILLIAM TOLBERT DEPARTED MARCH 22 AFTER 10-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO IVORY COAST. TOLBERT RECEIVED WARM WELCOME AT EACH STOP OF SIX-CITY TOUR OF INTERIOR OF IVORY COAST. FINAL COMMUNIQUE EMPHASIZED INTER-AFRICAN MATTERS AND REITERATED SUPPORT OF TOLBERT AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY FOR POLICY OF DIALOGUE. END SUMMARY.

1. LIBERIAN PRESIDENT WILLIAM TOLBERT, ACCOMPANIED BY WIFE AND ENTOURAGE OF LIBERIAN OFFICIALS, DEPARTED IVORY COAST MARCH 22 AFTER TEN-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT. DEPARTURE WAS ONE DAY LATER THAN ORIGINALLY PLANNED TO ALLOW FOR ADDITIONAL PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO LEADERS THE LAST EVENING OF TOLBERT'S STAY.

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2. AFTER TWO DAYS IN ABIDJAN, TOLBERT WAS TAKEN ON TOUR OF INTERIOR OF IVORY COAST WITH STOPS IN UONDOUKOU, KORHOGO, ODIENNE, MAN, BOUAKE AND YAMOUSSOUKRO. REGIONAL OFFICIALS AND LOCAL POPULATION TURNED OUT IN LARGE NUMBERS AT EACH STOP TO ACCORD TOLBERT AN ENTHUSIASTIC WELCOME. TOLBERT WAS ACCOMPANIED ON TOUR BY PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AND SENIOR GOIC OFFICIALS. EMPHASIS DURING REGIONAL TOUR WAS VIEWING OF LOCAL AGRICULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. LAST STOP OF TOUR WAS YAMOUSSOUKRO, HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY'S HOME TOWN AND SITE OF EXTENSIVE PRESIDENTIAL COFFEE AND COCOA PLANTATIONS.

3. FINAL COMMUNIQUE EMPHASIZED INTER-AFRICAN MATTERS AND REAFFIRMED THE TWO LEADERS' POLICY OF COMMUNICATION AND DIALOGUE IN ATTEMPTING TO RESOLVE IN A PEACEFUL MANNER THE DIFFERENCES EXISTING BETWEEN NATIONS AND PEOPLES. AT SAME TIME, COMMUNIQUE NOTED LIBERIAN AND GOIC SUPPORT FOR OAU, FOR LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, OPPOSITION TO APARTHEID AND RACISM, AND SUPPORT OF PORTUGAL'S DECOLONIZATION OF ITS TERRITORIES. ON BILATERAL RELATIONS, THE COMMUNIQUE NOTED THE WARMTH AND DEPTH OF TRADITIONAL LINKS BETWEEN LIBERIA AND IVORY COAST AND CALLED FOR INTENSIFIED COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. AN ACCORD WAS SIGNED TO THIS EFFECT. TWO PROJECTS SPECIFICALLY CITED FOR BILATERAL DEVELOPMENT WERE A HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME IN THE CAVALLY RIVER BASIN AREA AND A MONROVIA-ABIDJAN ROAD PROJECT. COMMUNIQUE ENDED WITH OFFICIAL INVITATION FOR HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY TO PAY RETURN VISIT TO LIBERIA, AN INVITATION WHICH HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE WITH DATES TO BE DETERMINED LATER.

4. COMMENT: KEYNOTE GIVEN TO VISIT IN HEAVY COVERAGE BY IVORIAN MEDIA WAS DEVELOPMENT AND DIALOGUE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON THE HOME FRONT AND DIALOGUE IN FOREIGN POLICY AS THE PRINCIPAL TOOL IN RESOLVING DIFFERENCES AND CONFLICT. IN LATTER CONNECTION, IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE LEAD EDITORIAL IN HEBDO, WEEKLY PARTY-CONTROLLED NEWSPAPER, WHICH DEFENDED POLICY OF DIALOGUE AGAINST CRITICS WHO MAINTAIN FOR EXAMPLE THAT CONTACT WITH SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD ONLY BE THROUGH OAU. UN, NOTED EDITORIAL, HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN MEDIATING OTHER CRISIS AREAS SUCH AS VIET-NAM, CYPRUS OR MIDDLE EAST.

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ON DOMESTIC FRONT, TOLBERT VISIT PROVIDED HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY WITH OPPORTUNITY IN THE SELECTION YEAR TO DEMONSTRATE GOIC INTEREST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF IVORY COAST INTERIOR.
SMITH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ABIDJA02457
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750103-0907
From: ABIDJAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750323/aaaaauvw.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ABIDJAN 2150
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LIBERIAN PRESIDENT TOLBERT CONCLUDES VISIT TO IVORY COAST
TAGS: PFOR, IV, LI, (TOLBERT, WILLIAM R)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006